

NL Wild Card Series:

Padres vs Cubs

Tuesday, September 30, 2025

Chicago, Illinois, USA

Wrigley Field

Chicago Cubs

Carson Kelly

Pregame Press Conference

Q. When you're looking at Machado and Tatis to start the game off, does this present something different to you guys in a shorter series rather than just a game during the regular season? How do you approach this differently, or do you?

CARSON KELLY: Yeah, I mean, I think we go back and see our matchups earlier on in the year and just see how they've been doing recently. They're tremendous players.

Formulating a game plan, sticking to that game plan, and they definitely have our attention at the top of the order.

Q. How much do you lean on -- you and Boyd are both veterans, but in Boyd's case, he's got some postseason experience. In some of those conversations as you're game planning, how are you leaning on the experience that Boyd is coming with?

CARSON KELLY: Oh, definitely. He's been on stages like this before. We just trust each other, continue to have that conversation, and if we need to make adjustments, we make those adjustments.

Again, it's business as usual. We go out there and continue to do what we do, stick to our routines and play our game.

Q. On a personal note, what does it mean to you to be in the playoffs here at this stage in your career, and have you had a moment to reflect on that?

CARSON KELLY: Yeah, it's special. Not many players get to do this. To play extra baseball is awesome, especially in a Cubs uniform and a team that I rooted for when I was a kid.

Just all in all, it's been really special, and I just can't wait to get out there.



Q. I know you haven't been in the playoffs, but you've been around playoff teams a lot. Is it different waking up in this atmosphere, or does it change back to normal once the game starts? How do you look at that?

CARSON KELLY: Yeah, having the day off, you can kind of feel the energy and the buzz around here. The workout yesterday was great and just talking to a bunch of guys that have been here on this stage before. It all comes back to it's another game.

We've got to continue to go out there and do our thing and let the energy and everything bring you to that next level instead of trying to get to that next level. Just continue to stay within your process and your plan and take it one pitch at a time, like I've said all year.

Q. You caught Matt in his first Wrigley Field start back in April against San Diego. You guys are here now almost six months later. Can you talk about you guys' partnership, how it's evolved, and what that means to both of you?

CARSON KELLY: Yeah, I've known Matt a long time. It goes back to -- he hosted me at Oregon State when I was being recruited from them. So I've known Matt a long time. We talk about it all the time, how special it is to play here and to be on the same team together. Every time we walk in from the bullpen, I look at him and say, like, this never gets old. It never does. Just how special.

The game -- it'll always be here. Players come and go, and just to cherish every single moment is something special.

Q. You've grown up as a Cubs fan. Did you have any memories of watching the Cubs make the playoffs as a kid, and did any of those come back to you as you got ready for today and this run?

CARSON KELLY: Yeah, just talking with my parents and family, just the memories and just being a kid, being around here, sitting in the bleachers, catching batting



practice and all that, it is kind of cool how it's come full circle. It just makes every single moment very special.

Q. I know that you like your affirmations. I was just wondering for this time of year whether there was anything different and whether you added something and was Matthew Boyd a good host?

CARSON KELLY: Matthew Boyd was a great host. Unfortunately I didn't commit to Oregon State. Not his fault. He didn't do anything wrong. It was a great visit.

But as for the affirmations, it's kind of the same. It's kind of the same.

I sit in them a little bit more and think about them and just trusting in my process and controlling what I can control.

Q. On Boyd, having seen his whole career, all the injuries he's gone through, to see him finally get a chance -- he's been in the playoffs before, but to be here all year and get to contribute so much during the season and now get the ball for Game 1, what's that like for you to see?

CARSON KELLY: I mean, it's a testament to all the hard work he's put in, and you kind of look at his career, right? He's had some ups and downs. He's been hurt. Hasn't pitched well. Then he comes in and he pitches really well.

I think as players, we look at it in an entirety and how it's been a long journey, but it makes these moments that much more worth it because of everything that you've gone through, and you can appreciate the lows and appreciate the highs and all the people that have been there to help you throughout this journey.

I think that's what makes this time of year so special is you think back of all the people that have really helped you get to where you're at, and you just want to say thank you to them.

Q. How would you describe the balance of relying on his strengths as a pitcher versus this is a short series, Game 1, pretty important? What do you anticipate or how have you guys discussed just in-game adjustments and how to approach that in a game like this?

CARSON KELLY: Yeah, every inning. Every inning you're talking about something, what we did well, what can we do a little bit different, what does it look like in the lineup coming the next inning, what does that look like. And being honest with those conversations.

I think, like I said earlier, we have to just stay within the moment and not try to rise to the moment and just stay within our process and what we do and play our game because at the end of the day, that's what we can control.

Q. Similarly, the last time you guys faced them was in April. How much can you rely on those two series versus information that might be more recent of how their current lineup has been trending?

CARSON KELLY: Yeah, we definitely look at what we did earlier on in the year but also what has been going on the last month, how they've been playing, who's hot, who's not, that sort of thing. Just kind of prepping for all different scenarios.

Q. Boyd always talks about his gratitude just being out there, and I know every pitcher has their different personality. I'm wondering what it's like on this day, your relationship with him, what it'll be like working with him because that's part of your job, too, is managing that side of it?

CARSON KELLY: Yeah, just to keep him in the moment, to keep him -- I always say to him, just pitch, because sometimes he can think and he's a thinker and loves to go through lineups and things like that and sometimes it's just like, go pitch. Be you. Be the best version of yourself. That's pretty much it.

He's been very good all year. He's had some ups and downs. But at the end of the day, when he goes out and pitches, he does his thing.

Q. You've been on a number of teams throughout your career, watched sports your whole life. Is there a better home-field advantage than Wrigley and the fans? You guys have had so many comeback wins here.

CARSON KELLY: Yeah, you think about all the times over the course of the year, comeback wins and the Cubs fans show up every single day. Doesn't matter rain or shine, they are there.

I think as a player, feeling that and seeing that every single day, it makes these moments -- like you want to go out and win for them.

I think that's something that we talk about a lot. We talk about it a lot in the clubhouse and the support that we get. It makes these moments playing playoff baseball mean a lot to us.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports



